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An Overview of the Conflict in Syria

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Abstract

In Syria, there is not expected to break out of the revolution of this magnitude. Most people of Syria before others did not expect that the revolution breaks out originally because the regime governs Syria in an oppressive security manner. The regime controls the situation that making it difficult of any popular movement. Political life is not existent in the country. There are no civil society organizations and trade unions are not real and not real parties or political groupings, making it difficult with the outbreak of the revolution in the country in such a dictatorship, security control, which controls everything in people's lives. So Syria was apparently outside the US and global thinking. It has been stated by some officials in America and has had their expectations outbreak of the revolution in Syria minimal because the global system was not ready to abandon the Assad regime because the regime is better for them. However, the revolution in Syria broke out, caught and swept across the country, confusing international systems that were not planning to substitute for the Syrian regime. The Syrian regime is no doubt that one of the major hubs in the region.

Key words: Syria, Conflict, Power, Parties, Resolution

JEL classification: Z18, K33

Introduction

Syrian revolution spark has begun in the city of Deraa, where the security arrested fifteen children after writing slogans on the wall of their school calling for freedom and demanding the fall of the regime on February 26, 2011. In the midst of it, there was a call for a demonstration on the Facebook page. This demonstration brought together personalities from different areas such as Homs, Deraa, and Damascus. According to the Syrian opposition, the protests were against oppression, corruption, and suppression of freedoms following arrested children in Daraa and humiliation suffered by their families, while supporters see the regime as a conspiracy to destroy the Arab resistance and spread chaos in Syria for the benefit of Israel. Some activists from the opposition call on Facebook, in an unprecedented challenge to the rule of Bashar Al-Assad, succumbed to the overwhelming wave of protests (known as the Arab Spring), which broke out in the Arab world in late 2010 and in 2011, especially the Tunisian revolution and the Egyptian January 25 Revolution.

The protests had been launched against President Bashar Al-Assad and his family which ruled the country since 1971 under the Arab Socialist Baath Party cover under the authority of the Emergency Law since 1963. Syrian youths led the protests which demanded to conduct political, social and economic reforms. They raised the slogan: "God, Syria, freedom ups," but the security forces and Syrian intelligence services and militias loyal to the regime (known as Shabiha) faced people with live ammunition. Then, they turned to the slogan "The people want to overthrow the regime." Hence, the Syrian government announced that the implementation of these incidents of militants and terrorists are liable to destabilize national security and establish an Islamic emirate in some parts of the country (Harris: 173-198).

The real start of the Syrian revolution was on March 18 under the slogan "Dignity Friday". The demonstrations in the cities of Daraa, Damascus, Homs and Baniyas offset by the security brutally, especially in Daraa. Thus fell four people dead at the hands of Syrian security forces in that city, and turned the demonstrations at the rest of the week to the bloody events in the vicinity of the Omari mosque and other areas of the city. Human rights organizations said that it led to the killing of 100 protesters at the end of the week. On March 25, demonstrations spread for the first time to pervade dozens of cities Syria under the slogan "Pride Friday" to include Hama, Latakia and elsewhere several in Damascus and its countryside (Harris, 2015:175).

Literature Review

Historical Background

The Baath Party took over power in Syria after a relatively pluralistic democratic government, short-lived during the reign of the First Republic in a military coup known as the eighth of March revolution in 1963. After several disagreements emerged after the coup, within the same party suites, and continued throughout the period from 1963 to 1970, the military coup last known as the corrective movement in 1970 brought minister of defense Hafez Al-Assad to power (Harris, 2015:1-26).

Al-Assad Founded robust regime based on the security grip internally and a series of alliances externally that ensured to him to be the longest ruler of the country since the demise of the Ottomans. On the fact that the Baath Party is "the leader party of the state and society" what turned the beliefs and ideas as a part of public institutions, curricula and the monopoly of the top positions and a series of other privileges, with the near absence of political freedoms, economic or even civil society organizations. In 1979 launched in the country what is known as "protests by trade unions" which turned out later to a military clash extended until its end in 1982 committed the massacre of Hama in the events of 1979 – 1982 (Samaha, 2012:107).

On July 10, 2000, Bashar al-Assad became president after the constitutional amendment to be able to run. The new ruling tolerates with other political activities, and that phase knew as the Damascus Spring. Also, the state headed toward economic liberalization and development of civil society. However, the political opening phase quickly ended with the arrest most of the Damascus spring symbols or fled abroad. In 2001

As Suwayda has seen protests against the regime. In 2004 Hasaka and Qamishli witnessed popular movements main-strong Syrian Kurds. The army took over the suppression of both actions with heavy weapons (Samaha, 2012:119).

During the Baath Party Congress in 2005, it decided to lift the state of emergency and the adoption of political pluralism, but none of these items has been achieved. In the same year, after the Syrian military withdrawal from Lebanon, the Syrian opposition launches Damascus Declaration for Democratic National Change. The same period has seen the absence of many of the regime pillars over the past decades as Abdul-Halim Khaddam, Ghazi Kanaan, and Mustafa Talas (Wedeen, 2013: 849-851).

Current Situation

War started in Syria five years ago. A crisis that began a local popular uprising turned into a sophisticated conflict in which multiple players on the ground inside and outside the country, to the point it became difficult to follow. The ceasefire has collapsed which reached by the Russians and the Americans despite the determination to find a solution to the conflict which continued for more than five years. Over time, the protest movement which started from Daraa has turned to a complex multilateral conflict. In which many players between the Syrians and foreigners and each party has its objectives and role. At a time, civilians pay the bill up to this war. The result is a massive number of dead and missing people, millions of internally displaced and refugees abroad (Human Rights Watch, 2016:547), in addition to the massive destruction and collapse of the economy.

As opposed to the forces of the regime, stand several multi-directional armed factions, some of the jihad, and almost all supported by outside parties. The United States leads an international coalition to face stretched ISLS by patrolling aerial and bombing specific targets. It includes Western powers, and countries from the Middle East such as Jordan, along with the Kurds who managed thanks to the struggle to obtain independence more than they enjoyed previously in Syria (Charountaki, 2015:337-340).

Conflict Causes

Lack of political life: There is no political life in Syria in the actual sense since the advent of the Baath Party in 1963 to power. There is no opinion of the people in the different conditions. There is no involvement of the individuals in the leadership of the country and direct it. There is no real election, and there is no rotation of power. There is nothing but the Assad family became the center of political life and its essence (Goulden, 2011:187-188).

Economic factor and poverty were widespread: Syria is a rich country in natural resources. It contains fertile plains abundant water. It has a skilled workforce. It has consistently judged the confiscation of land and claims it for public benefits. This forced people to migrate from the historical place. Syrians emigrated who confiscated their lands and farms to the shanty towns on the outskirts of cities, surrounded by the cities of oldest tinplate lack of the most basic services. In fact, it was a random housing where 42 percent of Syrians live (Rivlin, 2011:2-7).

Lack of dignity: The Syrian citizen feels that there is no dignity of any value, it is fair to detention without reasons to remember, but arrested no one knows at any branch had been arrested. It has long year's stays and sees neither his family nor any charge against him during the years of detention, which may extend to a decade or two without submitted to any trial. Citizens felt that they do not have honor with this regime. This feeling of a lack of dignity is one of the factors that prompted the citizen to the revolution to claims with the right to dignity (Goulden, 2011:189-190).

Injustice and inequality: Syrian citizen suffers from rampant injustice and inequality. They cannot claim their rights in any economic, commercial, residential, financial or educational field. Evenly with the other citizens of the sons of the Alawite sect, not up to some of his rights only through devices security, and a sense of Syrians inequality was one of the factors that led them to revolt against the regime (Goulden, 2011:189-190).

Conflict Parties

Someone confused on the fronts of the conflict with the number increasing of parties to the raging war since five years in Syria. The various Syrian opposition groups fighting each other and fighting the Syrian regime at the same time despite the fact that the Syrian regime is the common enemy. On the other hand, opposition groups have different ideologies appear and start fighting with each other too. What are the parties to the conflict in Syria for the time being? (Lister, 2014)

The Syrian regime: Syrian army still controls the reins of power in Syria led by Bashar Al-Assad. As it is still control of Damascus, Homs and major cities of Aleppo and coastal areas. The Iranians and the Hezbollah are pro-al-Assad. Russia also provides air support for Assad.

Syrian opposition: Syrian opposition enjoys the support of a group of international government agencies. The United States and its allies lead in Europe a role in facilitating the collection of supporting the opposition under many umbrellas. While the United States was initially supportive of the victory of the entire opposition in Syria through the overthrow of Assad, but it seems they have adopted a more precise strategy recently. After that, they realized that the settlement is the only practical solution to end the conflict.

Daesh (ISIS): Daesh is the main responsible for international terrorism because of bloody attacks carried out inside Syria and in Western countries. During recent years, the terrorist organization has lost vast areas because of Syrian regime forces attacks and Kurdish forces. This leads them to move at the moment to the status of defense. Currently, the terrorist organization lost grounds in Syria, but it still controls large parts of northern and eastern Syria (Lister, 2016:1-3).

Kurdish Units: The Kurds have the support of the United States. The people defense units of the Kurdish forces PYD crushed Daesh terrorist organization by a large margin with US air support. Kurdish controls the city of Hasaka since the outbreak of the Syrian crisis in 2011. For Turkey, the Kurds are enemy PYD extension of the PKK terrorist organization in Syria. Also, Turkey is concerned about the Kurds in northern Syria progress. Since Turkey does not want an independent Kurdish state on its southern border. The estimated numbers of People's Protection Units, the armed wing of the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Party (PYD) about 50 thousand fighters (Charountaki, 2015:341-345).

The Army of Conquest: It is one of the major opposition formations that combine moderate groups and various radical. Their main activities of this alliance are in the Syrian city of Idlib. Qatar and Saudi Arabia support it (Monshipouri & Wieger, 2014:149-152).

Jabhat Fateh Alsham: Al Nusra Front previously, is an extension of al-Qaeda and announced at the end of last July to continue its activities under the name Jabhat Fateh Alsham. It classified as a terrorist organization and carries some similar qualities to Daesh (Lister, 2016:7-8).

Free Syrian Army: Free Syrian Army, in fact, is not an army and does not have a central administration. It consists of many moderate groups and underlines its collections on large parts of southern and northwestern Syria. Turkey supports the Free Syrian Army (Lister, 2016:24).

Conflict Resolving

Syria lives since March 2011 crisis almost to be the first of its kind in the Middle East after the demand of overthrow of the regime. That Syrians have suffered during the five Baath Party rule decades. The event has evolved after 15 March 2011 turned from demanding freedom and dignity to the sectarian conflict of power as a result of excessive violence used by regime military machine firstly. Secondly with the worsening of the situation in Syria has become a threat to the interests of the major powers in the region which led to the intervention of these forces directly to find a solution to this dilemma according to their interests. UN Security Council called for meetings regarding the Syrian crisis, as well as various conferences sometimes. Despite they cannot find solutions, even partial to the crisis. The situation worsened to be finding a solution to the issue because it has become one of the major crises in the Middle East and has cast its shadow on the neighboring countries. Many of the neighboring countries are a haven

for thousands and even millions of Syrians who have fled from the fierce war in the country (Monshipouri & Wieger, 2014:150-155).

The Arab League: The Arab League was the first attempt to resolve the Syrian situation. It sent an observer mission to look at the humanitarian situation in Syria. The Syrian government agreed on November 2, 2011, on a plan by the Arab League to withdraw the army from cities, release political prisoners and hold talks with opposition leaders during the 15-day maximum. Syria's membership was frozen in the Arab League because of the Syrian regime has not responded to the plan of the Arab League on November 16, 2011, and give it a deadline three days to sign a protocol to send Arab observers to the country. Then it stretched the deadline until the evening of Friday, November 25, and with Syria's insistence on not signing the Arab League imposed economic sanctions on November 27 of the same year. The Syrian government on 19 December finally agreed to sign the initiative after a month and a half of deadlines and controversies. The vanguard of the mission entered the country on Thursday, 22 December 2011 after the signing of Syria on the Arab initiative and ended its work on 16 January 2012. On January 23, 2012, the Arab League put forward unanimously a new initiative to resolve the crisis in Syria; it requires that the opposition starts a dialogue with the regime to form a national government, Bashar al-Assad and delivers later full powers to his deputy in collaboration with the government to end the crisis. The so-called Syrian National Council welcomed the initiative, but the regime rejected the initiative. Thus, the Arab League mediation ending to failure (Monshipouri & Wieger, 2014:151-157).

Kofi Annan and the Syrian crisis: Kofi Annan was the United Nations and Arab League envoy to Syria. His plan began in February 2012 and is considered one of the most serious international attempts to resolve the Syrian crisis 2011-2012 diplomatically. The plan was to impose a cease-fire on all parties, starting from 10 April 2012. The Annan plan consists of 6 points was due to be parties to the conflict to implement it works, but that none of the parties did abide by the Annan plan. The fate of his plan was a failure, such as the Arab League initiative. After that, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon announced that Kofi Annan has decided to abandon his mission and not to stay in office after the expiry of its mandate in August 2012 (Monshipouri & Wieger, 2014:154-157).

Lakhdar Brahimi: The United Nations announced officially in August 2012 appointment of veteran Algerian diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi envoy to Syria to succeed Kofi Annan. Brahimi began his mission in Syria consultations held in European countries at the beginning. Then went to Syria and had several meetings with the regime. They met in Turkey, Egypt, and Russia with some Syrian opposition parties and continued meetings and discussions for a long period without the occurrence of developments on the ground. Brahimi after the entry into force of his attempts to find a solution in Syria presented a vision of the UN Security Council before submitting his resignation. Brahimi vision was to ensure the implementation of resolution 2139 on the delivery of humanitarian aid. Then reduce the violence and stop it. Moreover, the formation of an executive body lead to a transition to new Syria, organizes a national dialogue, being reviewed the constitution and organize elections on the basis and end the flow of weapons to Syria. After that, he subsequently submitted his resignation in Syria after it announced his failure and the failure of the international community in finding a solution to the Syrian crisis. Brahimi has presided over two rounds of negotiations between the Syrian government and the opposition in Switzerland, but the negotiations ended in a stalemate. In the last round, held in February, the two sides agreed to abide by local agreements for a ceasefire to allow the passage of humanitarian aid but fighting continued in most areas in Syria (Monshipouri & Wieger, 2014:155-157).

Staffan de Mistura: After the Brahimi resignation from office, the diplomat Staffan de Mistura the new player of United Nations in Syria has given document for a political solution through the three phases of the implementation of the Geneva talks. The document calls for the formation of a transitional governing body full executive authority, a joint military council of the regime and the opposition in a transitional phase to reach the country's presidential and parliamentary elections under the sponsorship of the United Nations. The document proposes a roadmap for implementation of the Geneva talks divided the solution into three phases. First is the negotiation phase, the second cease-fire and the third is the establishment of a transitional governing body with absolute authority in all military and security affairs. The final stage, according to the document it is the stage of the Syrian state in its final form, where the transitional phase is

leading to the access to the presidential and parliamentary elections under the sponsorship of the United Nations. De Mistura met with all the parties concerned of the Syrian crisis whether at home or abroad to explain his plan and work on it. However, it did not reach a conclusion yet and is still continuing its efforts to find a way out of the country from the five-year bloody war (Monshipouri & Wieger, 2014:154-157).

Geneva 1: The Geneva Conference 1 held in June 2012 the first international station supported by the United Nations to resolve the crisis in Syria. Representatives of the parties met to the conflict in Syria at the conference without the true representatives of the Syrian people. Moreover, there weren't attended by representatives of the Syrian Kurds. The conference provided a document for the formation of a government of representatives of the regime, and the opposition holds full powers of the transitional phase. The opposition considered that the transfer of powers to the government means the departure of the Syrian president but the regime refuse just to address the president's issue, saying that the Syrian people decide this matter through the voting box. The text of the agreement drew up by the five major countries, Germany and the Arab League to stop military operations. Also, they allows for humanitarian aid, the release of detainees and the preservation of the state institutions. However, the decisions of the conference so far remained a dead letter because of the lack of implementation by the parties concerned with the terms of the agreement (Lister, 2016:6-7).

Geneva 2: Geneva 2 conference which was held under the UN envoy to Syria Lakhdar Brahimi in February 2014 is not better than Geneva 1. Where was not attended by real representatives of the Syrian people, as there was no representation of the Kurds in the conference. A proposal supported by the United Nations and an international conference gathering in Geneva between the Syrian government and some Syrian opposition parties to discuss the possibility of forming a transitional government in Syria with full executive powers. There was a major role for the United Nations envoy for peace in Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, in preparation for taking place in close cooperation with the United States and Russia. Efforts are continuing to hold off Geneva 3 Conference (Al-Futisi, 2013).

Geneva 3: UN envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, told news after the session of the UN Security Council that the United Nations strengths must be effectively used in the Syrian dialogue in Geneva. He said: When we hold talks, we have to make sure that these talks have a good chance of success, not a conference just for the conference. De Mistura said: we do not reach a specific date because I was trying to avoid declaration until we finish the consultations between the heads of the meetings and come to an agreement when you are invited to the meeting there will be a great possibility because we can move forward to achieve the accomplishment. On the other hand, the UN envoy stressed that the peaceful settlement is facing difficulties in ensuring the participation of Kurds in Syrian talks.

Syrian crisis remains one of the most prominent issues that have held in the Middle East and the world in the 21st century because of the length of the crisis and its impact on neighboring countries and the world too, has not come up with solutions on Syria. Despite a large number of conferences held on them. Observers believe the situation that the main reason for the worsening situation is the foreign intervention in the country and not to involve real representatives of the Syrian people in the conferences held to find a solution to the crisis.

Results and Discussion

Future Outlook

We can discuss the future of the Syrian crisis in light of three main possibilities. All of which depend on the future of the UN Security Council resolution about military intervention:

The continuation of status quo as longer period: The move more than five years on the Syria crisis makes the likelihood of continuation longer a probability-weighted. It enhances the elements that kept the current crisis when its status is still the same. There is lack of consensus among the opposition and their differences increase. The coherence of the regime around the Alawite sect and opposes positions of the international powers, in which case without a UN resolution critical. The length of the status quo is more likely due to the length of the crisis sure to marginal positions, on the impact of the involvement of elements of the regime. The military and security forces committed crimes against humanity, and spread fear of

prosecution. This was reflected in the international envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, who pointed out that his mission in Syria seems almost impossible remarks. Moreover, announced his intention to establish an office for the international mission in Damascus, which refers to the conviction that the mission will not end quickly. Also reinforces that the Syrian crisis is governed internationally and regionally geometric equations specific, calculated a strong balance, and the potential for conflict in the regional war, making it necessary to calculate the results and returns of any confrontation with Syria on the front of the Arab - Israeli conflict. This case dominated by the conviction that the survival of the current situation is less damaging possibilities (Dahi, 2014:45-48).

The fall of the regime: No other alternative in the face of the former alternative but to impose the collapse of the fall of the regime equations, which was established by the above scenario of a sudden without warning. It can visualize specific imbalances suggest this scenario, through elements change of these equations. At the domestic level, it can happen if a military coup from inside the Al-Alawites family took place, or a split and the rebellion of the teams within the military. As can be imagined this happening, if managed mediation or international mission of reconciling the minimum demands of the opposition and the maximum concessions that could offer by the regime. The compromise includes a maximum possible, in light of the Syrian private reality, or deal out whereby the President and his family safe (Salamah, 2013).

A broader Regional clash: Each scenario from the two previous ones is addressing the future of the situation in Syria, according to the developments inside Syria and not imposes a deterioration of the situation to a clash or a regional war. While the Syrian crisis represents one of the branches within a series of crises and issues in a complex and intertwined comprehensive regional profile (Al-Futisi, 2013).

Conclusion

The conflict in Syria will not end or resolved by the resignation of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power once and for all, is the decisiveness point for the opposition or direction to military escalation seriously will lead to a disastrous war spread to most of the Middle East. Moreover, will have a directly and specifically on Syria's neighboring countries, especially Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey, Jordan and the Gulf states. Also, the rest of the international system in general, because that the Syrian crisis has taken a personal curve of revenge rather than a political, but a matter of dignity and prestige of international for some countries and parties outside the conflict. After all this time and effort material and human losses, rather than trying to contain a political crisis or a humanitarian, even if it is at the expense of the Syrian people (Al-Futisi, 2013).

After the Syrian regime's approval initially pressing the Iranian-Russian to participate in the third Geneva conference on the Syrian crisis, here is the Syrian opposition refuses to participate in it as a result of the widening of the conflict and armed confrontation between them and the regime to enter the Hezbollah of Syrian territory.

What are important are that projected scenarios or possible result of what was produced by the political and military results until the current are the following scenarios:

The end of the Syrian regime represented by President Bashar al-Assad to step down and leave voluntarily or by binding force or by entering into the international conflict leads to the same situation or to assassinate him in the end. Moreover, this scenario is contained strongest achieve within the next point in time due to the absence of a peaceful resolution of can convince the Syrian opposition to the formal system of survival.

The end of the Syrian opposition, both civil and military, and eliminate them once and for all by the Syrian regime and its allies in Iran and Hezbollah, which is only dropped genocide or a long-term conflict.

Continuation of the Syrian crisis to endlessly - and the sense that other myth, the Syrian regime and the opposition, both remain in a state of permanent conflict and fighting, which is unlikely and is out of the question regardless of the area of interest between the parties to the internal and external conflict.

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